



## COLLEGE READING SKILLS PROGRAM

A TRIO STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAM LOCATED IN THE **LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER**

### Director's Message

As we near the end of another academic year, we reflect on the happenings of this year. The College Reading Skills Program (CRSP) started the academic year in a new location. While the program continued to be part of the Learning Resource Center (LRC) umbrella, the program's office and tutoring space moved next door into the University Writing Center; the UWC joined the LRC umbrella. This move has taken some adjusting on several levels but it has lent itself to easy referrals and collaboration between CRSP and UWC.

In its 22<sup>nd</sup> year, CRSP served 250 students as determined by our grant; 145 were returning students and 105 were new to the program this year. Program participants received approximately 2700 hours of tutoring. Additionally, CRSP offered supplemental academic advising, financial literacy workshops, financial aid workshops, professional mentoring, peer mentoring, peer networking opportunities, the book club, and a graduate recognition luncheon. You will read about a few of these activities in the following pages.

In late May, CRSP administrative assistant, Rachel Dominguez welcomed her eleventh grandchild, Isabella. As many students will attest, despite her grandmotherly duties, Rachel still has the will and energy to give unconditionally to the many students who come by to vent or seek advice from her.

As a reminder, CRSP is funded as a 10-month program; therefore, the office is closed the entire months of July and August. Looking forward to another successful year in the fall!

### College Reading Skills Club

CRSC has been busy the past couple of weeks: from volunteering at the Lanterman Development's Special Olympics event on campus to organizing and attending the spring peer networking meeting

for the club and the program. Both events were a lot of fun and a great bonding experience. New officers have been elected to fill next year's Executive board positions: Victoria Roldan (President); Lisa Young (Vice President); Jenny Lopez (Secretary); Ruben Soria (Treasurer); Edgar Roldan (Fundraising Officer); Fatima Celis (Historian); and Ana Morales (Community Service Coordinator). Congratulations to our new officers!

Other fun events included attending the *God of Carnage* play at the Ahmanson Theatre with program participants and a successful taco sale (in the rain!) on May 17. The club was also able to present CRSP's graduates with a special gift at the Graduate Recognition Luncheon. All events went well and the club closed out the year with a ice skating party! If you are interested in becoming a part of CRSC, please email the E-board at: [crsc.calpolypomona@gmail.com](mailto:crsc.calpolypomona@gmail.com).



Members of CRSC engaged in the sale of delicious tacos in order to raise money for club activities.

## College Reading Skills Program In the LRC Library Rm. 2919

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### SPRING 2011 PEER TUTORS/MENTORS

RICHIE CLEMENTE  
REBECCA DURFLINGER  
EDWIN GUERRA  
JUDY JUAREZ  
CHRIS MARIN  
VANESSA MEDINA-REYNAGA  
SAMANTHA MUIR-VALDOVINOS  
RAYMOND NG  
REINA VILLANUEVA  
LISA YOUNG  
MICHAEL ZHOU

### PROGRAM HOURS

MON-THURS 8:00-5:00

FRI 8:30-4:00

### Book Club Corner

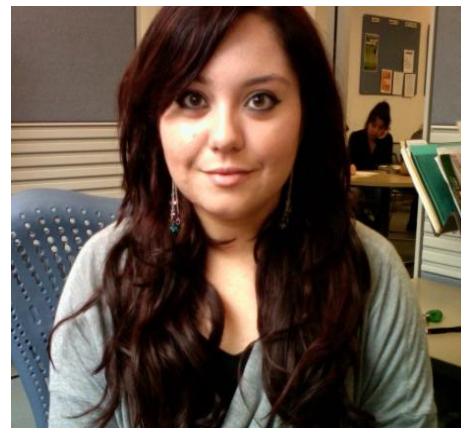
This spring, Book Club members continued their pursuit of non-fiction books and have enjoyed reading *Eat, Pray, Love: One Woman's Search for Everything Across Italy, India and Indonesia*. Despite the unfortunate lack of gelato at these meetings, members continued to gather to discuss perceived benefits of the pursuit of pleasure and the struggle to balance pleasure with spiritual and emotional well-being. Members were especially enchanted by Gilbert's ability to intertwine deeply personal insights with interesting historical context and self-deprecating humor.

Book Club members have also selected a book for fall: We will be reading *The Feast of the Goat* by Mario Vargas Llosa. Fall Book Club meetings have been tentatively set for Thursdays of weeks 3, 5, & 8 from 12-12:50 p.m. If you are interested in learning more about Book Club please call or email Cindy Greco at (909) 869-4347 or [csgreco@csupomona.edu](mailto:csgreco@csupomona.edu).

### Tutor Spotlight: Samantha Muir-Valdovinos

The spring 2011 featured tutor is Sam Muir-Valdovinos. Sam is a GEMS major who is graduating this spring. She joined the College Reading Skills Program in the Fall of 2009. When asked about her favorite aspect of working at CRSP, she replied, "Working together with such a close-knit group of people. We are like a family at CRSP and I see my students and my fellow tutors like brothers and sisters. Also, everyone involved in the program is really hard working and dedicated to bettering themselves and the community and I'm inspired by the work everyone puts in."

As a reading tutor, Sam naturally enjoys reading. Her favorite book is



Samantha Muir-Valdovinos,  
CRSP Tutor/Mentor

*The Unbearable Lightness of Being* by Milan Kundera. She feels the book "was very honest and sincere in its depiction of relationships and human emotion."

Beyond tutoring and reading, Sam enjoys singing Karaoke. She has attended every "Midnight Madness Karaoke" that has taken place here for the past four years. Musing further on her interests, she notes, "I learned to play the guitar off of YouTube videos. I don't really know how to read music but I know how guitar chords [sound] and if I know the chords of the song, I can play it and learn the strumming pattern by ear. In my spare time I like to play some good old country songs and I hope I get good enough to write my own song." She doesn't always sit home strumming her six-string in front of a computer, though. In fact, she regales, "I backpacked through France, Italy, and Spain when I was 19 years old. I managed to make it by with only four changes of clothes, 800 Euros, and I lived in hostels."

Sam's plans following graduation from Cal Poly are to go to Law School and pursue a career in the field of Public Interest.

## ***Financial Fitness Workshops***

One of the goals of TRIO Student Support Services programs is to provide students with opportunities to develop their understanding of financial concepts such as banking, budgeting, credit, and credit cards. In addition, participants are given opportunities to learn more about student financial aid, and to have their questions about filling out the FAFSA answered. CRSP collaborates with ARCHES to provide two of these financial workshops per quarter. CRSP teamed with McNair Scholars, another campus TRIO program, to provide a workshop on April 15 that featured a representative from Wells Fargo. Her interactive presentation answered many questions about credit and loans. ARCHES hosted a workshop on April 26 that centered on savings options, making major purchases, and borrowing money.

## ***Graduate Recognition Luncheon***

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual CRSP Graduate Recognition Luncheon was a great success. The event took place on May 26 at Kellogg West. Attendance to the event was nearly perfect, with only one invited guest absent. All of the graduates who were expected to attend were there, and each of them shared some very thoughtful and inspiring words with the audience. One of the graduates, Karina Perez, who was unable to attend the event, passed on a note of thanks to the program for assisting her in becoming a more confident reader and in completing her graduate school applications. She recently found out that she was accepted into the MSW program at UNLV and she “will definitely take all of the skills [she] has learned from the program with [her].”

The graduates and attendees also had the pleasure of hearing a motivating, encouraging, and interactive keynote speech by Victoria Calderon of Student Support and Equity Programs (SSEP). Being the Coordinator of Tutorial Services and Summer Bridge for SSEP, Victoria is also one of the many campus faculty and staff who support CRSP’s efforts to promote student success. The audience was filled with such “VIPs,” including staff from the Learning Resource Center, Upward Bound Programs, the Office of Financial Aid, SSEP, and

the Office of Academic Programs. Another important guest, President Michael Ortiz, was impressed enough with the graduates’ sentiments that he included a compliment about their “eloquence” in his May 31 President’s Message. President Ortiz also shared a few words of congratulation at the conclusion of the event. As CRSP has moved toward an emphasis on staying in quarterly contact with each participant from program entrance to graduation, the recognition luncheon has become an increasingly important event. Several graduates mentioned that being a part of CRSP from their freshman year until graduation was a valuable aspect of their experience at Cal Poly. Some noted that the CRSP office offered them a sort of “home” on campus as they progressed toward their degree, which is a goal that the CRSP staff seeks to achieve through services such as the upcoming CRSP Crunch N’ Munch, which gives participants a place to study, snack, and research throughout finals week.

## ***CRSP Challenge Scholarship***

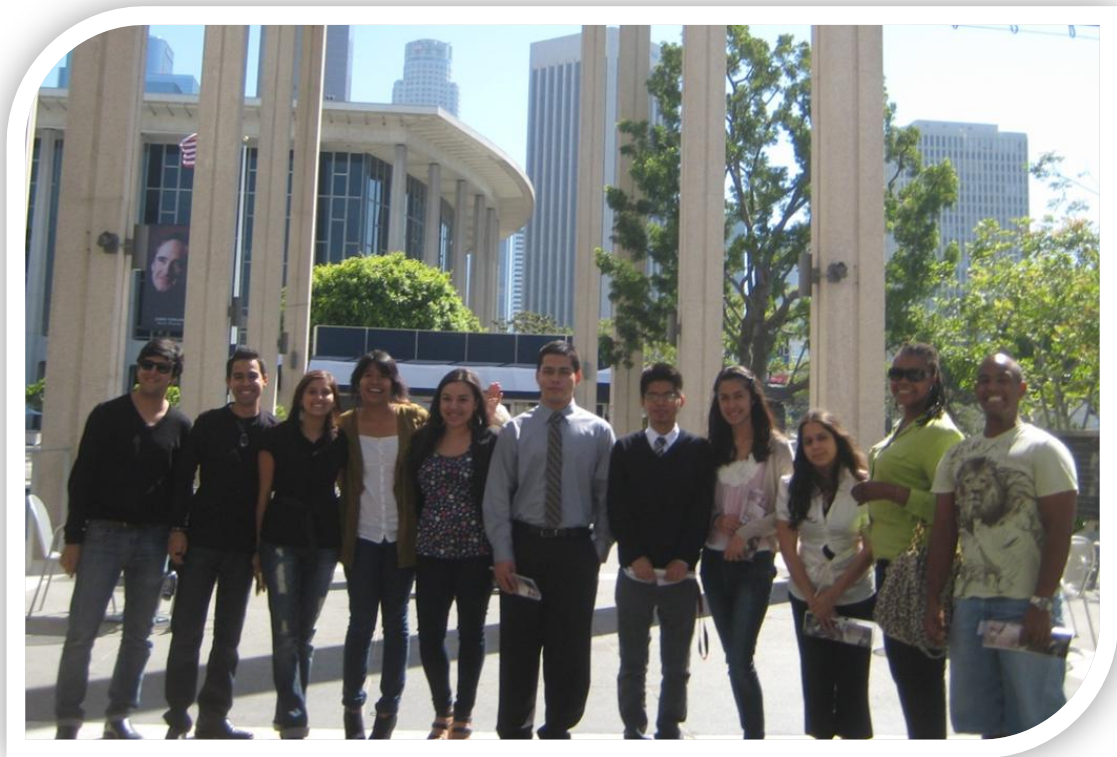
At the beginning of the spring quarter, the program awarded 30 participants with the *CRSP Challenge Scholarship*. Each recipient earned 1,200 dollars. In order to be eligible to apply, each applicant was required to attend fifteen tutorial sessions, and several CRSP workshops and events. A short essay was also required. Congratulations to scholarship winners named below!

*Vincent Alejandro  
Andy Barajas  
Alexander Bonilla  
Arlene Banuelos  
Joy Chang  
Tara Cutler  
Sandra Escoto  
Gloria Flores  
Luis Garcia  
Adrian Gonzalez  
Mauricio Gonzalez  
Shannay Graves  
Roy Guillen  
Amie Hernandez  
Cindy Hernandez*

*Jose Jimenez  
Amandeep Kaur  
Erica Ledesma  
Binbin Li  
Monica Moreno  
Christian Murillo  
Katherine Orbe  
Veronica Raymundo  
Irvin Reyes  
Martha Rojas  
Eve Sanford  
Raul Silis  
Ivan Silvar-Flores  
Carlos Soria  
Connie Yeh*

## ***Off-campus Cultural Event: God of Carnage***

On May 12, CRSP and ARCHES participants and staff boarded a bus bound for the burgeoning Los Angeles downtown to see an exclusive reuniting of the cast of the Broadway production of *God of Carnage*. Staged at the Ahmanson Theatre, the play features four—and only four—well-known actors, including James Gandolfini, Marcia Gay Harden, Jeff Daniels, and Hope Davis. Not only was this a first trip to a major playhouse for most attendees, for some it was the first play. Participants were able to interact with one another while gaining some valuable cultural exposure. The play itself was a single, 90-minute scene that proceeded without interruption. The characters worked together to conjure ever-changing moods and emotions in the audience, ranging widely and sometimes wildly from rage to laughter, painful silence to thoughtful reflection—fueled by alcohol and a parent’s protective instinct. It was a very successful trip; CRSP and ARCHES hope to continue collaborating to provide this opportunity for students each year.



*CRSC members and CRSP participants pose with Dr. Allison Douglas-Chicoye of Academic Programs after seeing God of Carnage at the Ahmanson Theatre on May 12, 2011.*

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